

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11758

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: POLITICAL ROUNDUP

1. GOVERNMENT FORMATION: FOLLOWING HIS INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER PARTIES AND THE TRADE UNIONS, ADREOTTI IS EXPECTED TODAY TO PRESENT TO THEM A DESCRIPTION OF HIS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM WHICH IS SAID TO BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. AFTER A ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS OF THIS PROGRAM, IT IS PREDICTED THAT ANDREOTTI WILL PRESENT HIS GOVERNMENT TO THE PARLIAMENT FOR A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE WITHIN A WEEK OR TEN DAYS WHETHER OF NOT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN ORGANIZING A MAJORITY. MOST OBSERVERS ANTICIPATE THAT THE ANDREOTTI "FORMULA" WILL BE A DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED EXTERNALLY BY THE REPUBLICANS (SARAGAT HAS, HOWEVER, SUGGESTED THAT AT BEST THE PSDI WILL ABSTAINLN AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THUS, THE SOCIALISTS REMAIN

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THE KEY TO WHETHER SUCH A GOVERNMENT CAN OBTAIN A MAJORITY,

AND THE DC HAS BEEN PRESSING HARD PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY TO PERSUADE AND PRESSURE THE SOCIALISTS TO ACT "AUTONOMOUSLY", I.E. INDEPENDENTLY OF THE PCI. THE NEW SOCIALIST SECRETARY CRAXI HAS SAID CLEARLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THE PSI WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT; HE HAS NOT YET SAID WHETHER THE PSI WILL OPPOSE, ABSTAIN, OR PROVIDE EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT. THE DC WOULD OBVIOUSLY PREFER THE LATTER FOR WOULD GIVE THE GOVERNMENT AND ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT, BUT FEW EXPECT IT AND THEY WILL INDEED BE VERY PLEASED TO GET THE PSI ABSENCE WHICH WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR A PLURALITY. ANDREOTTI OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT, BY PRESENTING HIS GOVERNMENT WITHOUT A "PRECONSTITUTED MAJORITY", IT WILL FORCE THE SOCIALISTS, TO PROVE THEIR AUTONOMY AND STATESMANSHIP. FOR THE SOCIALISTS, HOWEVER, IT WILL BE A DIFFICULT DECISION BECAUSE IT WILL REQUIRE THEM TO ACT CONTRARY TO THEIR ANNOUNCED POLICY FOR THE PAST YEAR, A POLICY THAT WAS RECENTLY REAFFIRMED BY THE DIRECTORATE THAT ELECTED CRAXI (ROME 11542).

2. THERE ARE FEW IN ROME WHO WOULD PREDICT A LONG LIFE FOR AN ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT. MOST EXPECT IT TO GET ITS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE (IN PART BECAUSE THE PARTIES SEE NO OTHER PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE FOR THE SHORT TERM), BUT NOT TO LAST MUCH BEYOND THE END OF THE YEAR. THERE CLEARLY WILL BE A REASSESSMENT AFTER THE GERMAN AND AMERICAN ELECTIONS AND THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT, GIVEN FOUR-SIX MONTHS TO DIGEST THEIR INTERNAL REVOLUTION, THE PSI MAY BY THAT TIME BE READY TO AGAIN PARTICIPATE IN A DC-LED GOVERNMENT.

3. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES: THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES ARE CURRENTLY MEETING TO DISCUSS AND NEGOTIATE THE CHAIRMANSIPS OF THE SEVERAL COMMITTEES (14 IN THE CHAMBER, 12 IN THE SENATE, AND 4 JOINT ONE).

A FORMAL MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT IS EXPECTED ON FRIDAY, JULY 23. WHILE NOTHING HAS YET BEEN DECIDED, CURRENT RUMORS SUGGEST THAT THE DC WILL GET 10 CHAIRMANSIPS
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(5 IN EACH HOUSE), THE PCI EIGHT (4 IN EACH HOUSE), THE PSI FOUR (3 IN THE CHAMBER AND 1 IN THE SENATE), AND ONE EACH TO THE RPI AND PSDI IN THE CHAMBER, ONE TO THE "MIXED GROUP" (LEFT) IN THE SENATE, AND ONE TO DSDI-PLI GROUP IN THE SENATE. FOR THE JOINT COMMITTEES INVESTIGATING (THE ONE CURRENTLY PURSUING THE LOCKHEED AFFAIR, RAI-TV WATCHDOG, REGIONAL PROBLEMS, AND MEZZOGIORNO), IT IS PREDICTED THAT THE DC WILL GET TWO,

AND THE PCI AND PSI ONE EACH.

4. ZACCAGNINI'S POSITION SHAKY? THERE ARE INCREASING SIGNS THAT ZACCAGNINI'S POSITION AS HEAD OF THE DC MAY BE OF SHORT DURATION. THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS CRITICISMS IN RECENT WEEKS OF HIS PERFORMANCE, AND DC PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE WITH INCREASING OPENNESS QUESTIONING WHETHER HIS ABILITIES ARE EQUAL TO THE JOB. THE "RENEWAL" WHICH HIS ELECTION PROMISED HAS NOT COME ABOUT WITHIN THE PARTY, AND THE LEFT OF THE DC WHICH SUPPORTED HIM HAS LOST ITS SLIGHT PRE-ELECTION MAJORITY. PERHAPS BY TRYING TO PLEASE TOO MANY ELEMENTS OF THE DC, HE HAS EARNED THEIR HOSTILITY. SOME ARE PREDICTING THAT, AT THE NEXT DC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING, HE WILL BE REPLACED WITH MORO -- UNLESS THE FORTY YEARS OLDS CAN BRING OFF A SOCIALIST STYLE INTERNAL REVOLUTION. VOLPE

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